

Virtual and social presence in livestream screendance:

An interdisciplinary analysis of liveness in *Drumming*

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Abstract

Dance has featured on screen for decades: this phenomenon is also called screendance. Screendance is essentially characterised by manipulating time, space and bodily movement of a live dance performance. Moreover, the screen functions as a barrier between the performance and the viewer experience, which omits the aspect of liveness that is traditionally connected to dance. However, due to recent developments in digital technologies, screendance now has the possibility to be livestreamed, and therefore, to return the aspect of liveness to the experience. Liveness is understood here as a construction, and feeling of connection is what makes a live broadcast appealing according to Karin van Es, which consists both of virtual and social presence.

In order to gain insight into how livestream screendance can be optimised in the future, this thesis will explore which elements of Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker's *Drumming* together create a sense of liveness and how this feeling of connection, as described by Van Es, is constructed. *Drumming* is a dance performance, performed by de Keersmaeker's dance company Rosas, which was streamed on YouTube Live to the circumstances concerning COVID-19. In order to see which elements contribute to liveness, I focused on different elements such as choreography, filmic techniques and digital affordances of YouTube Live to guide the analysis. By focusing on these elements, I analysed how they can together create a feeling of connection with both the livestream itself and other audience members, and how this contributes to the sense of liveness. I will argue that livestream screendance can create a sense of liveness through technology which supports social interaction and through artistic choices that create a sense of virtual presence and human connection. This can make the performing arts, including dance, more accessible for people who don't have the ability to visit a physical theatre.

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Introduction

Dance is an artform that is traditionally viewed as being in essence a live performance.¹ However, dance has increasingly featured on screen as well. This form of dance on screen is also referred to as *screendance*.² Screendance is not a new phenomenon. Douglas Rosenberg and Claudia Klappenberg, editors of *The International Journal of Screendance*, argue that choreographies, moving bodies and dance have been pictured on screen ever since the moving image existed.³ Today, the rise of digital technologies have resulted in screendance being more versatile and dynamic than ever.⁴ Now that digital technologies are evolving rapidly, there are many different kinds of screendance. Dance is not only seen on film, but also on social media, as for example TikTok and Instagram. Besides, there are plentiful contexts in which dance is screened; it is not only screened on the silver screen, but also on for example our smartphones, which we are able to take anywhere.⁵

There has been done some research on screendance which makes use of digital technologies, in for example by Andrea Davidson, who researched the emerging field of 'digital dance'. She explores the implications of mediation for dance, how new media platforms serve as new 'digital stages' which highlight spectatorial participation, and how computers and digital technology introduce new modes of composition.⁶ Moreover, Naomi Jackson wrote about the increasing role of the Internet, and specifically YouTube, in the evolution of screendance. She discusses two case studies that illuminate how YouTube has provided a platform for exposure for marginalized groups through urban dance videos. Besides analysing the filmic conventions of the dance videos on YouTube, which is a familiar approach within screendance studies, she analyses the socio-political dimensions of popular dance on YouTube.⁷

¹ Martin Barker, "The Many Meanings of 'Liveness'," in *Live To Your Local Cinema: The Remarkable Rise of Livecasting* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 48.

² Sharril Dodds, *Dance on Screen: Genres and Media from Hollywood to Experimental Art* (New York: Palgrave, 2005), 31-33.

³ Doug Rosenberg and Claudia Klappenberg, "Screendance: The Practice in Print," *The International Journal of Screendance* 1, no. 1 (2010): 1.

⁴ Harmony Bench, "Screendance 2.0: Social Dance-Media," *Participations: Audience & Reception Studies* 7, no. 2 (November 2010): 183; Andrea Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance: *Dance and New Media*," in *The Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies*, ed. Douglas Rosenberg (Oxford University Press, 2016): 21-22.

⁵ Jason Farman, "Mobile media performances as asynchronous embodiment," *The International Journal of Screendance* 2 (2019): 48-51.

⁶ Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance," 1

⁷ Naomi Jackson, "A Rhizomatic Revolution?: Popular Dancing, YouTubing, and Exchange in Screendance," in *The Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies*, ed. Douglas Rosenberg (Oxford University Press, 2016). Jackson focuses her research on the socio-political dimension of dance on YouTube.

Yet, the expanding possibilities for screendance also raise questions about the traditional essence of dance as a form of art: its 'liveness'.⁸ As the audience becomes physically separated from the performance of dance in screendance, the artform therefore loses its sense of liveness. There is an ongoing debate about the tension between the 'live' and the recorded or mediated.⁹ This tension stresses the barrier between the live and the mediated, and therefore implies that the mediated cannot be live. Existing research on digital dance practices, as for example by Davidson and Jackson, has not addressed the question that reaches towards the essence of dance, i.e. the question of how (digital) screendance has the possibility to regain its liveness with the rise of livestreaming. The lack of research to digital livestream screendance is due to the fact that screendance has rarely been available in the form of a (digital) livestream. Yet over the past few decades, this has changed. Live broadcasts now have the possibility to be streamed on the Internet and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Snapchat, expanding the possibilities for livestreaming dance and making it easier for screendance to be streamed live.¹⁰ Due to the circumstances of COVID-19, artists were even forced to share their art online, to remain visible for their audiences. This has accelerated the evolution of digital livestreaming further, offering both free and paid livestreams to audiences at home.¹¹ By streaming performance online, artists have the possibility to regain the essential quality of liveness, only in a different shape.

Liveness is a complex and versatile concept that is not just defined by the technicality of the thing being live. As Karin van Es argues, some things that are live, don't actually feel live, for example when watching a livestream of a blooming flower.¹² This implies that liveness is not something that is given, but something that must be created, because it requires more than just the technical aspect of something being live. Thus it can be stated that liveness is a construction. In the construction of liveness, the social aspect plays an indispensable role¹³: the feeling of having access to something that is happening right now, simultaneously with other audience members. Next to the social aspect, other aspects that make the audience feel connected to the livestream are of great importance for the construction of liveness as well, such as aspects that create a sense of "being-there" or virtual presence.

⁸ Matthew Reason and Anja Mølle Lindelof, "Introduction," in *Experiencing Liveness in Contemporary Performance: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Matthew Reason and Anja Mølle Lindelof (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

⁹ Barker, "The Many Meanings of Liveness," 42.

¹⁰ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1245.

¹¹ Laura Risk, "Imperfections and Intimacies: Trebling Effects and the Improvisational Aesthetics of Pandemic-Era Livestreaming," *Critical Studies in Improvisation* 14, no. 1 (2021): 15.

¹² Karin van Es, "Liveness redux: on media and their claim to be live," *Media, Culture & Society* 39, no. 8 (2017): 1254.

¹³ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1248.

As dance and theatre are essentially characterised as being live, it is interesting to investigate how this notion of liveness returns in livestream screendance. Therefore, this thesis will address the question how different elements of the screendance performance *Drumming* co-function to construct liveness. This performance, choreographed by Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, was made available online as a livestream, due to the restrictions concerning COVID-19, on YouTube Live in October 2020.¹⁴ For this analysis, I focused on choreography and dramaturgy, filmic techniques such as camerawork and editing, and finally, affordances of the platform of YouTube Live and the comments in the live chat.¹⁵ By focusing on these elements, I analysed how they can together create a feeling of connection with both the livestream itself and other audience members, and how this contributes to the sense of liveness. I will argue that livestream screendance can create a sense of liveness through technology which supports social interaction and through artistic choices that create a sense of virtual presence and human connection.

Since livestreams have the potential to create a valuable alternative for audiences who cannot attend live performances, for example people with disabilities or social anxiety¹⁶, it is a technology that is very much worth studying. By looking at how elements such as affordances and filmic techniques function together and create a sense of liveness, livestreams can be optimized with this knowledge in the future. Even after the corona crisis, an analysis of YouTube as a platform for screendance can provide insight into how this medium can be used for broadcasting dance and how this potential of livestreams can be fulfilled. In this way, the valuable and essential experience of live dance can become more accessible to everyone, even in a mediated form.

Existing research on screendance and liveness

The literature that will be discussed in the next paragraphs shows that there is plenty of research on liveness and livestreams in different contexts, and that the research in screendance is growing too. Although all these studies address important issues concerning livestreaming and screendance and most studies overlap, they still expose an existing gap in the literature: the specific combination of livestream screendance. Yet, insights on this particular phenomenon will help us understand specifically how livestream screendance can regain a sense of liveness, but also more broadly how exactly the experience of liveness relates to mediation. *Drumming* functions as a case study which

¹⁴ Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, "Drumming live stream," performed by Rosas, music by Steve Reich, dir. Gerard Jan Claes & Olivia Rochette, Brussels, October 30th and 31st, 2020, livestream performance, 24:26-1:27:15, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FFS8C_nQ7A. The justification for the selection of this case study will be further explained in the analysis section below.

¹⁵ All results are systematically processed in a table (see appendix I, II, III). The justification for the chosen aspects will be further discussed in the method section.

¹⁶ Matthew Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," *Int. J. Arts and Technology* 10, no. 4 (2017): 280.

complements the existing research in multiple ways, as it is a theatrical performance streamed live on an online platform due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

An overview of screendance

Dance is generally characterised by the use of physical space, time and the body. According to Sharril Dodds, screendance distinguishes itself from theatrical dance because these three elements can be manipulated by technology. For example, different camera angles can give different perspectives on the body. Moreover, the location and timeframe in which the dance is performed can be edited. Although editing can be a limitation to how the body is perceived, it can also extend the possibilities of dance, Dodds argues.¹⁷ Although dance has featured on screen since the rise of the moving image, filmmaker and choreographer Maya Deren was one of the first to really experiment with the possibilities of dance on screen. Filmic techniques such as camerawork and editing allowed Deren to experiment with time, space and the body on screen, resulting in an entirely different performance from what was performed live.¹⁸

With the rise of digital technologies and the Internet, choreographers and filmmakers increasingly embedded these technologies into their screendance works, resulting in a new form of screendance: 'digital dance'. According to Andrea Davidson, digital technology expanded the possibilities for screendance even further. Space, time and bodily movement could not only be manipulated by filmic techniques such as editing, but the body could also be augmented or extended, and entire choreographies could be disseminated in digital productions.¹⁹ Davidson argues that mediation has transformed theatrical conventions (such as spectatorial participation), the dynamics of performance, and notions of performativity.²⁰ In this way, working with digital technologies allowed for more intimacy, multiple perspectives and a more immersive experience.²¹ Thus, digital technology has the possibility to shape both the viewer's experience and the production process of the dance. This was already done in the 20th century by choreographer Merce Cunningham.²²

¹⁷ Dodds, "Dance on Screen," 31-33.

¹⁸ "Innovating the Industry," Maya Deren – her life and work, Cinedans, last modified March 8th 2019, <http://cinedans.nl/maya-deren/>

¹⁹ Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance," 2.

²⁰ Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance," 23.

²¹ Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance," 2.

²² "The Innovator," About Merce Cunningham, Merce Cunningham Trust, accessed May 27th 2021, <https://www.mercecunningham.org/about/merce-cunningham/> Cunningham experimented with dance in combination with new media, such as motion capture technology. He was the first to use the computer as a choreographic tool. The digital technologies that Cunningham used enabled him to create a choreography without needing the dancers to try it out.

Not only do digital technologies shape the way screendance is produced, the Internet plays an increasing role in how screendance is produced and distributed as well. Harmony Bench argues that just like film, video and broadcast television, social media are serving as platforms for screendance, and this has developed further in the past few years. 'Social dance-media', as Bench calls it, are characterised by sharing, copying, editing and recirculating dance videos, and they differentiate from stage-based choreographies by "insisting upon public engagement and participation".²³ Naomi Jackson also argues that the rise of the Internet has greatly influenced the evolution of screendance. She argues that the Internet in general, and more specifically YouTube, is viewed as "a platform for exposure, visibility, and commentary for anyone, from the common person to the known celebrity". In other words, the platform is available for anyone and has a global reach. She states that by means of these qualities, YouTube is viewed as a democratic platform by many people.²⁴ Thus, if YouTube is used as a platform for screendance, more people have access to this art form and more people have the freedom and the ability to create a screendance themselves.²⁵

In their article "Researching YouTube," Jane Arthurs, Sophia Drakopoulou and Alessandro Gandini give an overview of the research on YouTube in the past decades. They state that the platform has mainly been analysed in relation to participatory culture and user generated content, vlogging and celebrity culture, and as a hybrid commercial space.²⁶ Although the performing arts on YouTube remain a relatively underexposed field, there has been some research done on screendance on YouTube, for example by Jackson. However, this article, as well as the article by Bench, focuses mainly on popular dance, and not on theatrical dance. Jackson even argues that "the kind of dancing that has been linked most closely with new digital technology is popular dance".²⁷ This has been true for a long time: theatrical dance is normally not made available online. The COVID-19 pandemic has nevertheless forced artists to make their work available online, in order to keep themselves visible for the public.²⁸ So now, theatrical dance is also put online and relies on digital technology.

Drumming poses as a perfect example of theatrical dance which is streamed live on YouTube.²⁹ It extends the possibilities of theatrical dance by using filmic techniques such as

²³ Bench, "Screendance 2.0," 184.

²⁴ Jackson, "A Rhizomatic Revolution?," 2.

²⁵ It should be noted, however, that YouTube cannot always be seen as a democratic platform. For further reading, see José van Dijck and Thomas Poell, *The Platform Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

²⁶ Jane Arthurs, Sophia Drakopoulou and Alessandro Gandini, "Researching YouTube," *Convergence* 24, no. 1 (2018): 3-15.

²⁷ Jackson, "A Rhizomatic Revolution?," 4.

²⁸ Risk, "Imperfections and Intimacies," 15.

²⁹ Research on livestreams mostly relate to the livestreaming platform Twitch, which focuses mainly on user-generated content. YouTube Live is a livestreaming platform that is still underexplored in media studies. For further reading on Twitch, see Kristine Ask, Hendrik Storstein Spilker, and Martin Hansen, "The politics of user-platform relationships: Co-scripting live-streaming on Twitch. tv," *First Monday* 24, no. 7 (2019).

camerawork and editing. Moreover, it provides for a more immersive experience and spectatorial participation by the digital affordances of the platform of YouTube, as Davidson suggested would be the case in digital dance.³⁰ Making the performance available online has through a livestream made their art accessible for a larger public. Even though theatrical dance through a livestream can never replace the experience of a live performance,³¹ the producers of this livestream have tried to make this livestream feel as much live as possible; for the feeling of 'liveness' is not just something being live in the technical sense, which will be further explained below.

The construction of liveness

In order to understand liveness in screendance, we need a broader understanding of liveness itself. As Van Es argues, not all media can easily be labelled 'live'.³² According to her, there is a distinction between things which are 'real-time', which refers to the technical aspect of liveness, and things that are 'live' which include a form of sociality.³³ In line with Van Es' argument, Nick Couldry argues that live broadcasts guarantee a potential connection to a shared social reality that is happening at the moment.³⁴ Also in line with Van Es, Couldry states that liveness is a *construction* that reaches beyond the technical aspect.³⁵ It is important to recognize liveness as a construction, because it implies that the way in which livestreams are constructed can be altered. By analysing the ways in which liveness can be constructed, we gain more insight into how liveness works as a construct.

Live music and theatre performances have not been as popular in the form of live streaming content as, for example, sports games and digital gaming.³⁶ Theatre and performances by for example the National Theatre in London and the New York Metropolitan Opera have been streamed live at cinemas to make the performance available for remote audiences,³⁷ but the performing arts have rarely screened on online platforms, as mentioned above.³⁸ Van Es writes that different kinds of live broadcasts have different selling points. For example, news livestreams promise *authenticity* and

³⁰ Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance," 2.

³¹ Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," 281.

³² Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1248.

³³ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1247.

³⁴ Nick Couldry, "Liveness, 'Reality,' and the Mediated Habitus from the Television to the Mobile Phone," *The Communication Review* 7, no. 4 (August 2010): 355.

³⁵ Couldry, "Liveness, 'Reality,' and the Mediated Habitus," 356. Couldry argues that the concept of liveness rests of a chain of ideas consisting of, among other things, gaining access to something of broader significance that is relevant right now and not later and that audiences for certain live broadcasts are representative social groups.

³⁶ Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," 271.

³⁷ Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," 272.

³⁸ Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," 274. This is a significant difference, because in online platform streaming, there is often only one audience: the online audience. Audiences for livecasting in cinemas are split up between live audiences and online audiences. This makes online audiences feel remote from the live audience.

realness, and sports livestreams focus on *unpredictability* and *presence*. Sometimes, liveness is also constructed by *participation*.³⁹ Livestreams of the performing arts rely mostly on the notions of authenticity, presence, and participation, since these are the selling points that stress being part of a theatrical experience. Hence, these are also the points which will be paid attention to in the analysis in *Drumming*.

What's also crucial in making a live broadcast appealing according to Van Es, is a *feeling of connection*. To illustrate this, she gives the example of watching a surveillance camera, which does not activate this feeling. She argues that the social aspect plays a major role in this: that by experiencing something that is live, people are able to talk about it with others. However, this feeling of connection does not just refer to the possibility of being part of a social group, but also part of the experience.⁴⁰ Hence, the feeling of connection is divided up into two parts: the feeling of connection to other members of the audience, and the feeling of connection to the livestream itself and what is depicted on screen. The feeling of connection to the other members of the audience, or the feeling of "being together with another", also virtually, is called *social presence*. Matthew Hudson states that social presence can be created by providing a platform where members of the audience can directly communicate with each other and the characters in the performance.⁴¹ In *Drumming*, the social aspect will be analysed by looking mainly at the live chat function embedded in the platform of YouTube Live.

Although the social aspect is indispensable for the construction of liveness, it is not the only aspect that matters. As stated above, it is also important for people to feel as if they are part of the experience. According to Van Es, authenticity, among other things, is inherently connected to this.⁴² As with liveness, authenticity does not mean 'real' and this cannot be determined objectively. In fact, authenticity is a socially constructed phenomenon.⁴³ Paddy Scannell argues that in order to construct authentic experience, it is important for the audience to feel as if they "are there".⁴⁴ For example, Van Es illustrates that the caption 'live' in the corner of the screen, onscreen slips and direct address can make the viewer feel as if they are part of what is happening on screen.⁴⁵ For this reason, the technical features of *Drumming* which enable a sense of liveness and being-there will also be taken into account while analysing the affordances of the platform.

³⁹ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1249.

⁴⁰ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1250.

⁴¹ Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," 275.

⁴² Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1250.

⁴³ Glenn R. Carroll and Dennis Ray Wheaton, "The organizational construction of authenticity: An examination of contemporary food and dining in the U.S.," *Research in Organisational Behaviour* 29 (2009): 256.

⁴⁴ Paddy Scannell, "Authenticity and Experience," *Discourse Studies* 3, no. 4 (2001): 407.

⁴⁵ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1250.

Apart from technical features of the platform that can create a sense of being-there or virtual presence, human connection can also create virtual presence. According to Laura Risk, human mistakes are the flip side of human connection. She argues that the “aesthetic of pandemic-era livestreaming is an aesthetic of imperfection” and create a form of intimacy by doing so, namely “both the unexpected intimacy of imperfection and the planned intimacy of virtual performance”.⁴⁶ Thus, choices to show these imperfections on screen can create an increased sense of intimacy and human connection. Therefore, audiences can feel more connected not only to the livestream, but also to the performers. In this way, the audience is more deeply involved in what is transpiring on screen, which can create the illusion that they *are there*.

Another way in which the audience can feel connected to the performers is through *kinaesthetic empathy*: a form of empathy which is transferred by movement (kine = movement, aethetis = sensation).⁴⁷ Dee Reynolds describes kinaesthetic empathy as a form of empathy where the audience experiences similar emotions as the dancers by being deeply involved with the medium of dance itself, instead of what it represents. The choreographed movement is central here, as well as the emotion it expresses.⁴⁸ Reynolds argues that this affective reaction can also exist in mediated dance or screendance.⁴⁹ In fact, Sophie Walon, who analysed kinaesthetic empathy in *Rosas danst Rosas*, argued that screendance is a highly sensory medium that conveys kinaesthetic sensations.⁵⁰ For example, close-ups underline certain points of contact between dancing bodies and certain facial expressions of the dancers. These close-ups create a more intimate experience and allow the viewer to empathise better with the dancers than if the performance would be perceived from a theatrical distance.⁵¹

Finally, in order to have a feeling of ‘being-there’ or virtual presence, one must be fully immersed in what they are watching: if an audience member is not deeply involved in what is happening on screen, they cannot have a sense of virtual presence.⁵² According to Van Es, notions as immediacy and presence are inherently connected to liveness as well.⁵³ Similarly, Valentijn T. Visch

⁴⁶ Risk, “Imperfections and Intimacies,” 8.

⁴⁷ Karen Wood, “Kinesthetic Empathy: Conditions for Viewing,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies*, ed. Douglas Rosenberg (Oxford University Press, 2016): 1.

⁴⁸ Dee Reynolds, “Kinesthetic Empathy and the Dance’s Body: From Emotion to Affect,” in *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices*, ed. Dee Reynolds en Matthew Reason (Bristol: Intellect, 2012), 123.

⁴⁹ Reynolds, “Kinesthetic Empathy and the Dance’s Body,” 131.

⁵⁰ Sophie Walon, “Screendance Sensations: Multi-Sensory Experiences in Thierry De Mey’s Screendance,” in *Art in Motion: Current Research in Screendance*, ed. Franck Boulège en Marisa C. Hayes (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 3.

⁵¹ Walon, “Screendance Sensations,” 4.

⁵² Valentijn T. Visch, Ed S. Tan and Dylan Molenaar, “The emotional and cognitive effect of immersion in film viewing,” *Cognition and Emotion* 24, no. 8 (2010): 1440.

⁵³ Van Es, “Liveness redux,” 1250.

et al. note that “immersed viewers experience the virtual world as immediate and present.”⁵⁴

Therefore, this analysis will explore how *Drumming* allows for a feeling of connection, consisting of both social and virtual presence, and how the performance has the possibility to immerse the audience.

Method

To guide this analysis, three elements have been chosen as focal points: The dance itself, the filmic techniques used, and the workings of the platform of YouTube Live. By focusing on these elements, we gain an insight into how liveness is constructed through all of these elements. These elements should however be considered to be not merely complementary to each other. In fact, the analysis also serves to illuminate how these elements co-function to create a sense of liveness together, since they stand in direct relation to one another and can therefore strengthen each other’s abilities to create liveness.

Dance: choreography and dramaturgy

For the dance element of the performance, I focused mainly on the choreography and the dramaturgical choices that were made. These data were later used to gain an insight into how the filmic techniques and the affordances of the platform of YouTube Live manipulate the dance and have shaped the way the dance is displayed on screen. The dance element has been divided into four different aspects that have systematically been processed in a table: choreography, music, lighting and expression (see appendix I). Furthermore, there is an extra column in the table for other remarks and observations. To structure the table, the performance has been divided up into time frames. Each time a new part of the choreography starts marks the start of a new time frame. A new part of the choreography is typically marked by a change in music or placement of the dancers.

The choice to focus specifically on choreography, music, lighting and expression is based on the grounded theory methodology. This entails that the analysis shapes the way that the data is collected. This allows the researcher to collect more data around emerging themes and elements that stand out. By applying the grounded theory methodology, Kathy Charmaz argues, you “avoid the pitfall of amassing volumes of general, unfocused data that overwhelm you and do not lead to anything new”.⁵⁵ Moreover, this methodology forces the researcher to refrain from the restrictions of thinking from a specific frame. The analytical categories arise from the data and not from a hypothesis.⁵⁶ Hence, while focusing on the choreographic and dramaturgical elements, these four

⁵⁴ Visch, Tan and Molenaar, “The emotional and cognitive effect of immersion in film viewing,” 1440.

⁵⁵ Kathy Charmaz, “Grounded theory,” in *Rethinking Methods of Psychology*, ed. Harré R. Smith and L. van Langehove (London: Sage Publications, 1996): 31.

⁵⁶ Charmaz, “Grounded theory,” 32.

elements (choreography, music, lighting, expression) emerged in the process. They are closely aligned with each other in *Drumming*: as the music builds up, the tempo of the movement rises as well, the colours turn more intense and the expression becomes more intense and warm. Because of the continuous flow in energy that these elements create together, they have the potential to immerse the audience.

Filmic techniques

The element of filmic techniques has been looked at from a neo-formalist perspective, as described by Kristin Thompson.⁵⁷ In line with grounded theory, according to neo-formalism, the film's form determines which elements should be prominent in the analysis,⁵⁸ and the particular method is developed in relation to the viewing experience itself.⁵⁹ According to John Blewitt, the purpose of neo-formalist film analysis is "to identify the principal properties of film as an art object and their significant articulation in and for a given text".⁶⁰ As the performance was filmed and edited live, the makers of *Drumming* were not able to apply very complex filmic techniques, as the main goal is to film the dance as it is happening. Nevertheless, the camerawork and editing were still paid attention to, because they display the dance in a way that creates the illusion as if the viewer is *in* the performance, and therefore contribute to virtual presence. This will be elaborated on further in the analysis section. Observations about both camerawork and editing have systematically been put in a table as well (see appendix II).⁶¹ As with choreography and dramaturgy, the table is structured based on time frames. However, the time frames are not the same as the time frames used for the table concerning choreographic and dramaturgical analysis. Here, a new time frame starts when a new sequence of shots is introduced. Throughout the performance, extreme long shots are used to give an overview of the stage when there is a change in setting or placement of the dancers. Hence, every new sequence of shots starts with an extreme long shot.

The platform of YouTube Live

With regard to the platform of YouTube Live, two specific aspects were analysed: the comments in the live chat and the affordances of the interface of YouTube Live itself. Although the performance

⁵⁷ Blewitt, "A Neo-Formalist Approach to Film Aesthetics and Education," 92.

⁵⁸ John Blewitt, "A Neo-Formalist Approach to Film Aesthetics and Education," *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 31, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 92.

⁵⁹ Blewitt, "A Neo-Formalist Approach to Film Aesthetics and Education," 93.

⁶⁰ Blewitt, "A Neo-Formalist Approach to Film Aesthetics and Education," 92.

⁶¹ To label the type of shots that were used in the performance, I used David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's *Film Art: an Introduction*. Most shots included medium shots (shots from the waist up), medium long shots (shots from the knees up), long shots (shots from the full body) and extreme long shots (overview shots of the stage): David Bordwell en Kristin Thompson, "The Shot: Cinematography," in *Film Art: An Introduction* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2012): 190.

was not analysed when it was actually broadcast live, a reconstruction of the live experience can be made based on the comments in the live chat. These have systematically been put in a table as well. They have been divided into eight categories: general comments about the performance, comments about a specific performer, technical/practical comments, comments relating to COVID-19, comments about filmic techniques, comments relating to the liveness of the experience, comments relating to previous performances and other (see appendix III). In line with the grounded theory methodology, categories have been made while analysing. For example, while analysing, it stood out that many comments concerned general praise for the performance or for specific performers, which is why there is a specific category for those two type of comments. Moreover, I added the category 'comments relating to the liveness of the experience' to gain an insight into how audience members experienced a sense of liveness and how they expressed it if they did. Finally, the category 'comments relating to filmic techniques' has been designed to see if there were audience members who specifically noticed the camerawork and editing and may have commented on it in relation to liveness.

Aside from the comments in the live chat, the interface of YouTube Live was also analysed. To determine on which affordances of the platform the analysis would be focused, parts of the walkthrough method as introduced by Ben Light et al. were used.⁶² Through this method, the technological mechanisms and cultural references incorporated therein are analysed through direct interaction with the YouTube Live interface. In this way, insight can be gained into how the technology of the platform directs the users and how their experience is shaped. The natural interactions with the medium are delayed, so that they are brought to the attention and can be critically analysed.⁶³ I focused mainly on the technical walkthrough part of the method of Light et al., and more specifically on the *user interface arrangement* (how YouTube Live guides users through activities) and *functions and features* (groups of arrangements that enable activity).⁶⁴ Moreover, I have focused the most on features have the ability to directly shape the viewer's experience, as that is most relevant with regard to this research. For example, I looked at the different modes of viewing, different options for volume, video speed and the live chat, and the overall look of the platform. As there were not huge amounts of data to collect here, the observations were noted down in bullet points, of which the most relevant outcomes have been processed in the analysis below.

⁶² Ben Light, Jean Burgess en Stefanie Duguay, "The walkthrough method: An approach to the study of apps," *New Media & Society* 20, no. 3 (2016): 881-900.

⁶³ Light, Burgess en Duguay, "The walkthrough method," 882.

⁶⁴ Light, Burgess en Duguay, "The walkthrough method," 891.

Analysis

The observations that have arisen from the analysis have intentionally not been discussed per element, as the used method suggested. This has been done in order to emphasise how these elements, such as filmic techniques, choreography and digital affordances, work together and complement each other to create liveness.

Drumming: an introduction

Drumming is a dance performance choreographed by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker and performed by de Keersmaeker's dance company Rosas. The piece has been named after the eponymous minimalistic percussion score composed by the American composer Steve Reich. He is known for using *phasing* or *phase-shifting* techniques. Phasing arises when two players, playing the same instrument, play a certain rhythm in unison. Then, one of the players starts changing the tempo of the rhythm, resulting in the two players playing out of sync, but creating a new rhythm. In *Drumming*, different types of instruments are used throughout the piece. It starts off with bongo drums, then the drums are replaced with marimba, which is again replaced by glockenspiel and piccolo, until finally all instruments come together. The dance performance *Drumming* is based on this music piece, in the sense that it starts with a single movement which is followed by an "infinite number of variations across time and space." It was premièred in Vienna in 1998 on ImpulsTanz festival.⁶⁵ The revival of the performance was planned to take place 'in real life', but has been transformed into a livestream on YouTube due to the restrictions concerning the pandemic. *Drumming* was especially chosen for this analysis as it has both immersive qualities and the filmic techniques and technologies which allow for virtual and social presence. Moreover, works by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, often in collaboration with dance group Rosas, are regularly analysed within screendance. Research into de Keersmaeker's work is primarily film-analytical or dramaturgical in nature.⁶⁶ It is therefore interesting to analyse a work by de Keersmaeker, performed by Rosas, from a perspective that also considers the affordances of the platform on which it is streamed.

Virtual presence in Drumming

To dissect how liveness is constructed in *Drumming*, the collected data were analysed with regard to the concepts that have been discussed earlier, which have the ability to create a feeling of connection. To map how the feeling of connection is created in *Drumming*, I first looked at the

⁶⁵ "DRUMMING, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker/Rosas & Ictus," Productions, Rosas, accessed June 9th, 2021, <https://www.rosas.be/en/productions/355-drumming>

⁶⁶ Tarryn-Tanille Prinsloo, Marth Munro, en Chris Broodryk, "The efficacy of Laban movement analysis as a framework for observing and analysing space in Rosas danst Rosas," *Research in Dance Education* 20, no. 3 (2019); Walon, "Screendance Sensations," 2.

aspects that created a feeling of connection between the audience and the livestream itself. Virtual presence is an important part of the construction of liveness: the audience needs to be given the feeling as if they are actually there in that moment. In order to feel this sense of 'being-there', one must be fully immersed in what they are engaging with. *Drumming* can be said to be immersive in various ways. To begin with, the music continuously flows throughout the entire performance, with different shifts in energy. There is never a moment of silence; both movement and music keep going on until the end. The other elements of the piece are closely aligned with the music: as the rhythm speeds up, the movement of the dancers goes faster as well and the lighting turns brighter orange. Overall, the performance is a continuous flow of energy that changes rapidly. The transitions between the different dancers and different parts in the choreography blend into each other seamlessly. The continuous flow of all elements in the performance together have the possibility to immerse the audience, by creating a feeling of 'being-there'. Different modes of viewing also have different implications for the immersive qualities of the performance. For example, when watching the performance in theatre mode or full screen, there are less distractions visible on screen, which increases the possibility for immersion. Viewers can even cast the video to their television, which enables them to make a theatre at home. This affords the viewer to make the performance even more immersive.

Other technical aspects have the possibility to create a sense of 'being-there' as well. As Van Es and Couldry argued, the technical aspect is not the only aspect which can create a sense of liveness,⁶⁷ but it does have the ability to enhance liveness. The most obvious one is the 'LIVE' indication at the bottom of the video, including a red dot signifying its importance and immediacy. Certain comments enhance the feeling of liveness as well. For example, someone comments in the chat box: *'Ladies and gentlemen, please take your seats. The show is about to start. We remind you to switch off your mobile phones'* (see appendix III). Lastly, the screen stays black for a while after the credits have rolled, as if being in a theatre. Both the black screen and this specific comment attempt to recreate the theatrical experience, and therefore add to the sense of being-there or virtual presence.

Furthermore, virtual presence was constructed by choosing to show the audience aspects of the studio that feel exclusive. For example, we regularly see the camera people walking across the stage, shots of the crew backstage, and at multiple points throughout the performance, we see the dancers in the wings of the stage. These are aspects that would have not been visible when normally visiting a theatre.

⁶⁷ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1248; Couldry, "Liveness, 'Reality,' and the Mediated Habitus," 356.



Figure 1. Dancers chat backstage before the performance starts.



Figure 2. Camera crew is seen on stage during the performance.



Figure 3. Backstage crew is seen on the screen during the performance.

Also, the stage décor is built as if it isn't 'finished yet': rolls of orange sail function as a floor, but they haven't been completely unrolled. Moreover, the camera films the dancers in medium shots, allowing the viewer to see their panting and sweaty faces and their facial expressions.



Figure 4. The rolls of orange sail are not completely unrolled, and the dancers sit on them during the performance.



Figure 5. The camera films the dancers in medium shot, which shows the sweat on their necks.



Figure 6. The medium shots also show the subtle facial expressions on the dancers' faces.

The décor, the backstage shots and the medium shots which show details of the dancers' faces add to the experience of seeing something exclusive, authentic and unpolished, which the audience would not be able to see when normally visiting a theatre. Moreover, most parts of the performance are filmed with a handheld camera, which gives a shaky image. This documentary-like aesthetic gives "the impression of a privileged representation of authenticity within a fictional and staged

environment.”⁶⁸ Thus, by using a handheld camera, the makers of the livestream construct the impression of authenticity. The notion of authenticity is inherently connected to the feeling of being part of the experience of the livestream, as Karin van Es argued, and therefore adds to the sense of virtual presence.⁶⁹ Also, Paddy Scannell argued that a condition for authentic experience is the sense of ‘being-there’.⁷⁰

The medium shots of the dancers’ sweaty faces also remind the viewer that the dancers are also ‘just’ humans, and therefore allow for human connection. As Laura Risk also noted: choosing to show imperfections on screen allows for a more intimate experience and creates a sense of human connection.⁷¹ This means that unpolished footage which also show human imperfections can create intimacy, through which viewers feel more connected to what is happening on screen. Furthermore, when normally visiting a theatre, it would not have been able to see the dancers up close. Not only does this enable the viewer to see sweat, panting and subtle facial expressions – filming dancers from up close also enables the viewer to view movement from up close. As movement can convey emotion and empathy through kinaesthetic empathy, seeing the moving bodies up close allows the viewer to empathise better with the dancers than if the performance would be perceived from a theatrical distance. For example, as part of the choreography, some dancers express a certain body language in which they seem to be hugging.



Figure 6. Dancers seem to be hugging as they pick each other up.

⁶⁸ Ohad Landesman, “In and out of this world: digital video and the aesthetics of realism in the new hybrid documentary,” *Studies in Documentary Film* 2, no. 1 (2008): 43.

⁶⁹ Van Es, “Liveness redux,” 1250.

⁷⁰ Scannell, “Authenticity and Experience,” 407.

⁷¹ Risk, “Imperfections and Intimacies,” 8.

With all the movement going on by the other dancers on stage, such a detail would be hardly noticed if it was not shown in medium (long) shot. Moreover, the dancers are filmed with a handheld camera so the camera people are able to move along with the dancers. For example, when a dancer swings down, the camera swings down along with her.



Figure 7. Dancer is about to swing down.



Figure 8. Dancer swings down and the camera person moves down along with her.

This gives a shaky image, but simultaneously brings the energy of the movement across from the screen and therefore also supports the kinaesthetic empathetic character of the dance. Additionally, the camera each time centres a different dancer, so each dancer gets individual attention. In this

sense, the viewer might unintentionally create different characters for the dancers and that allows them to empathise with the dancers better as well.

The camera people continuously move their way across the stage while they film the performance. Besides that, the dancers move very close to the camera while not looking directly in the lens of the camera. Together with the camera people following the movement of the dancers, this does not only create a sense of being-there, but also gives the viewer the point of view as if they were *in* the performance themselves – almost as if they were one of the dancers. This gives the impression that you as a viewer are really *part of* the performance, instead of being merely a spectator. This is also seen in the live chat: someone comments '*so great to be a part of this*' (see appendix III), which implies that this audience member feels that they are not just simply watching, but they somehow feel part of what is happening on screen.

Social presence in *Drumming*

As Karin van Es argued, the social aspect is a vital part of the construction of liveness.⁷² Moreover, Hudson stated that in order to create social presence, one must provide a platform where audience members can actively communicate with each other and the performers.⁷³ The main aspect of *Drumming* which is inherently social and which provides the possibilities for communication, is the live chat. The live chat enables the audience members at home to leave comments while watching the livestream. Rosas is a dance company which consists of dancers from all over the world. Many people who are commenting in the live chat are friends and family of the dancers (for example, someone comments 'mon cousin franki', which translates to 'my cousin franki' (see appendix III), which is why the audience has a very international character too. This can also be seen by the comments, which are written in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French and Dutch. By streaming the performance online, it is much more likely to attain an international audience than if the performance would be performed live in one specific country or one specific city. Therefore, livestreaming the performing arts has the possibility to connect people worldwide. People connect with each other by mentioning or tagging other users in the live chat, so they can be directly addressed. For example, one person comments: '@Gilca Miranda, a sua filha a maravilhosa mesmo' which translates to '*Gilca Miranda, your wonderful daughter*' (see appendix III). Hence, this person directly addresses another viewer (who, in a theatrical setting, might be sitting at the other side of the room, making it impossible to communicate). By commenting, audience members create a sense of social presence for each other. For example, many people comment emojis of clapping hands,

⁷² Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1254.

⁷³ Hudson, "Live streaming performing arts within a social virtual environment," 275.

applause or 'bravo' at the end of the performance. Applause is normally not performed alone, and by commenting this, the audience members give each other and the performers the feeling as if they are not only 'there', but also together. Moreover, someone comments: '*Het is natuurlijk niet hetzelfde als in de theaterzaal te zitten maar fijn dat we toch een stukje cultuur kunnen meepikken in deze barre tijden*' which translates to '*Of course it's not the same as sitting in the theater but it's nice that we can still experience a piece of culture in these harsh times*' (see appendix III). By using the word 'we', this person emphasises the hard times they as an audience are going through, but that they still have the ability to enjoy culture *together*. Therefore, they directly address the feeling of social presence. This feeling of social presence can even be reanimated, because viewers have the possibility to replay the live chat as if in real-time when rewatching the performance.

Furthermore, whereas live performance offers audience members the possibility to look at different parts of the stage and therefore follow different dancers, in a performance livestream, all audience members view the performance from the same perspective. Especially in *Drumming*, which is a performance in which multiple dancers are on stage dancing different choreographies throughout the whole piece, people would normally not be looking at the same corners of the stage. Or, as James Monaco put it: "we watch a play as we will, we see a film as a filmmaker wants us to see it".⁷⁴ Knowing as an audience member that all the other audience members are watching the exact same thing, can also create a sense of togetherness. The knowledge that other viewers are watching the performance from the exact same perspective at the exact same time therefore increases social presence.⁷⁵

Through the platform of YouTube Live, the performance has a participatory character. Karin van Es argued that participation was one of the selling points of livestreams.⁷⁶ Moreover, as Harmony Bench also wrote: social dance-media insist on public engagement and participation.⁷⁷ Even though Bench's article focused mainly on popular dance, viewers of *Drumming* do have the possibility to participate in the experience, and they make use of this possibility. For example, the audience addressed the makers of the livestream by asking to show their favourite dancers on screen multiple times. Although the editing and camera team do not respond to the wishes of the audience by actually showing their favourite dancers, it shows that the audience members do have the ability to connect not only with other audience members, but also with the makers of the livestream

⁷⁴ James Monaco, *How to Read a Film: Technology, Language, History and Theory of Film and Media* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 33.

⁷⁵ However, viewers do have the capacity to move their focus within the screen and therefore they still have the ability to have a different viewer experience: see Barker, "The Many Meanings of Liveness," 48. Besides, people watch performances from their own frame of reference, resulting in each audience member interpreting the performance differently.

⁷⁶ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1249.

⁷⁷ Bench, "Screendance 2.0," 184.

themselves. Because audience members make use of this ability, it highlights the audience's urge to participate in the experience of the livestream and perhaps to influence the way it is made. When normally visiting a dance performance, it would be unusual for the audience, for example, to shout the names of the dancers that they think should come on stage. Therefore, the audience members who are participating show that digital dance has the possibility to break with theatrical conventions, as Andrea Davidson suggested. Another example of participation of audience members can be seen by the person who comments asking people to turn off their phones: even though the theatre etiquette doesn't apply at home, this person still feels the urge to participate by stressing that people should act as if they were in a theatre. Through the participatory character, liveness can be recreated on online platforms such as YouTube. However, online liveness takes on a different shape compared to unmediated liveness, because the participatory character is not common for theatrical settings. The option to participate highlights interaction between the audience and the makers of the livestream, and therefore also adds to social presence.

Conclusion

From this analysis, I can conclude that digital technology and filmic techniques in *Drumming* have the potential to make the livestream performance feel live. This was done by creating a sense of both virtual and social presence. I have argued that while the social aspect is important when analysing liveness, virtual presence is equally as important in the construction of liveness: it is what makes the audience feel part of what is happening on screen, and what makes them feel as if they *were there*.

In *Drumming*, virtual presence was created by immersion, technical features which recreate the theatrical setting, authenticity and human connection. By the ongoing flow of energy of music combined with movement and corresponding lighting, *Drumming* allows for an immersive experience. This immersion is taken a step further by technical aspects of the livestream which create a sense of immediacy through the LIVE sign and attempt to recreate the theatrical setting through comments and the black screen at the end. Furthermore, the performance looks authentic, exclusive and unpolished, not only through the documentary aesthetic but also by showing the crew backstage, the dancers' sweaty faces, and the décor which seems unfinished. This can create a sense of being-there and makes the audience feel as if they are part of the experience. The sweat on the dancers' faces also shows imperfection, which calls for human connection in its place. Moreover, human connection can also be created by kinaesthetic empathy, as the performance is filmed with a handheld camera and therefore moves along with the dancers. Besides, medium (long) shots have the ability to highlight certain body language better than in theatrical performance, such as dancers hugging. Finally, by following a different dancer every time, each dancer gets individual attention and therefore it is easier to empathise with the specific dancers.

Social presence also plays an important role for the construction of liveness in *Drumming*. The platform of YouTube live affords the viewer the possibility to communicate with both other audience members and the makers of the livestream by using the live chat box. As the performance is streamed online, the audience consists of many different nationalities, and therefore, audience members have the possibility to connect with other people who are interested in dance worldwide. By commenting, audience members have the possibility to create social presence for each other. Furthermore, because all audience members view the performance from the same perspective, the feeling of togetherness might be greater than when normally visiting a theatre. Finally, viewers also had the possibility to participate by addressing the makers of the livestream. Social presence is created by enabling viewers to communicate with both each other and the livestream hosts. Therefore, this analysis supports the notion of Van Es and Couldry that liveness is a construction in which the social plays a major role.⁷⁸

Drumming is an example of a screendance which uses digital technology and filmic techniques to shape and enhance the viewer experience, which is in line with Andrea Davidson's research on digital dance.⁷⁹ By analysing a case where livestream and screendance have been combined, I also added to the existing field of research in digital screendance, in which livestreams are an underexposed phenomenon. This analysis shows how different elements of a livestream screendance can together construct liveness. In this construction, the different elements such as choreography, filmic techniques and digital affordances do not function in isolation – it is their interconnectedness that has the possibility to create liveness. Therefore, liveness is not something that exists on merely the technical level, but on all levels of digital livestream screendance.

By looking at how liveness is constructed in *Drumming*, we have gained more insight into how digital technology and filmic techniques have been used to display the performance in a way that feels live and creates a sense of being-there. In short, while a common view is that screendance distinguishes itself from theatrical performance, among other things, by not being live, I have argued instead that livestream screendance has the possibility to regain the live quality, which is said to be essential in dance performance. On the other side, dance and the performing arts in general are disregarded in the field of liveness and livestreaming. Hence, I want to show that both fields of liveness and screendance studies provide valuable insights by combining their approaches, and that they therefore complement each other.

This analysis of *Drumming* does not only provide a valuable addition to the existing research in the field of screendance and studies on livestreaming, it also provides insights into how

⁷⁸ Van Es, "Liveness redux," 1248; Couldry, "Liveness, 'Reality,' and the Mediated Habitus," 356.

⁷⁹ Davidson, "Extending the Discourse of Screendance," 2.

livestreams of the performing arts can be optimized by the use of technology. With this knowledge, livestreams of the performing arts can provide a lively experience for audiences at home, also after the pandemic, for people who are not able to visit a physical theatre. Art and culture is a human necessity and should be available to everyone, and livestreams have a possibility in doing so.

Considering as the performance *Drumming* was not analysed while actually being live, when it comes to future research, more detailed insights can be gained if livestream screendance is analysed when it is actually being performed and streamed live. For example, specific affordances of the platform can be different when the performance is viewed live. Moreover, to gain more knowledge on how the performance is actually perceived by the audience, it can be beneficial to analyse viewer responses on *Drumming*. The focus points that have been used for this analysis can be used to structure audience research to guide interview questions. For example, interviewers can ask whether audience members experienced virtual and social presence. In this way, this research can be complemented by research on viewer responses to get a more detailed view on how livestream screendance functions and appeals to the audience.

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Appendix I: choreography and dramaturgy

Time frame	Choreography	Music	Lighting	Expression	Other remarks
24:25-26:47	Dancers backstage. Dancer 1 gets into position		The studio is lighted with TL-light, as if there is no performance taking place.		The dancers are chatting and smiling backstage. They nod right before the show starts.
26:48-29:00	Solo Dancer 1		When the music starts, the light turns off except for a spotlight on the black carpet.		
29:00-30:45	Dancer 1 dances synchronously with another dancer of which we only see the silhouette				
30:45-36:03	More dancers enter the dance and dance in the semi-darkness. Dancer 3 looks at dancer 6 when he dances. One male dancer dressed in black (Dancer 2) remains and dances together with Dancer 1				
36:03-37:53	Dancer 1 dances on her own and comes to a halt when the tempo of the music slows down. When the rhythm accelerates she starts moving again				
37:53-40:29	More dancers enter the space as the pace of the music moves faster. The dancers run, dance and skip from one side of the stage to the other in small groups. They continuously and fluently switch groups. One man dressed in white and silver (Dancer 3) walks across the stage through the groups of dancers.				
40:29-41:26	Dancer 2 dances a duet with dancer 3 while the other dancers keep running and dancing across the				

	stage. One girl (Dancer 4) stands next to them as they dance.				
41:26-42:32	Dancers 1, 2, 3 and 4 dance run in circles and some other dancers join the stage. Then dancers 1-4 start dancing and the others run along the sides of the stage.				
42:32-43:37	Dancer 3 is dancing together with a girl dressed in a white dress (dancer 5) and a man dressed in black and white (dancer 6). They join them shortly and then leave him to dance alone again.				
43:37-45:17	Other dancers join the stage and move in a repetitive manner. Dancer 3 leaves the stage and later joins the repetitive movements.	Marimba enters the music slowly.			
45:17-45:57	Duet between dancer 5 and 2.			They gently laugh at each other. The facial expressions are curious and happy but very minimal.	
45:57-49:10	More dancers enter the stage one by one and then leave again one by one. Some dancers sit on the rolls of dance floor at the side of the stage. This fragments ends with a small duet between dancer 1 and an older man dressed in black and white (dancer 7).	Soft rhythmic singing enters the music.	The lighting turns more brighter orange.	The facial expressions of the dancers are gently happy.	
49:10-50:36	Starts with short solo by dancer 1, followed by a duet between dancer 1 and 2, who has just entered the stage. Then dancer 7 comes on stage and dances together with dancer 2. Dancers 1 and 4 join.			They are smiling, and they look pleasantly surprised and filled with wonder. They touch each other in a friendly matter, picking each other	

				up and putting each other down again carefully.	
50:36-55:07	The 4 dancers dance together. Dancer 2 has a duet with dancer 4. Then more dancers come on stage and different groups of dancers dance different choreography patterns. Multiple dancers dance duets with each other, each time focusing on a new dancer.				
55:07-58:11	All dancers enter the stage. They dance together, and then there are multiple consecutive duets while the remaining dancers walk together in a line forward and backwards. Then a male dancer dressed in black and white (dancer 8) dances solo and shortly joins in again with other dancers.			Their facial expressions are joyful and almost relieved. When they pick each other up, they seem to be hugging each other.	
58:11-1:02:42	Dancers walk forward in a diagonal line and then in a horizontal line while +/- four dancers dance in the same patterns as before, but each differently. This repeats, but each different dancers walking in different directions across the stage and different dancers performing solos or duets. It ends with a small solo from dancer 1. One girl (dancer 9) trades her silver-white blouse for an orange-red one. Two dancers walk to each side of the stage and lay down a stretched out piece of string on the stage. One dancer pulls the string and when she releases it, it leaves a trail of powdery smoke.	A higher-pitched marimba enters the music which slowly builds down to a single rhythm.			
1:02:24-1:03:23	Dancer 9 dances solo on the black carpet.	When the string is pulled, higher pitched-marimba enters the music.	The lighting turns dark when the string is pulled. There is only a spotlight on the carpet		

			with the stars, and a few bright yellow but dimmed spots at the side of the stage.		
1:03:23-1:05:17	Dancer 5 runs on stage, now dressed in a silver dress. Dancer 9 and 5 both dance solo, then slowly meet each other in movement and then go solo again. Then 4 male dancers come on stage to dance with dancer 9. They pick her up and twirl her around.	The marimba is replaced by glockenspiel.	When dancer 5 starts dancing, the entire stage is lit up again.	She looks at them seductively.	
1:05:17-1:05:47	While dancer 5 dances with dancer 7 while the other dancers walk to the center of the stage.			Dancer 5 rests her face on the shoulder of dancer 7 with her eyes closed. He seems to comfort her, and when he puts her down she 'wakes up' but they still hold hands.	
1:05:47-1:10:20	All dancers are on stage, grouped together on the right half of the stage. They move slowly and synchronously.	Later on, piccolo sound enters the music.			This is the first time that they are all on stage dancing synchronously and also the first time that there is nobody running around or dancing fast.
1:10:20-1:11:37	While the rest keeps dancing on slowly, dancer 7 picks up a few dancers and puts them elsewhere. When some dancers are picked up, they freeze like mannequins. When he puts them down, they start				

	moving again. One girl he picks up doesn't freeze but puts her arms around him.				
1:11:37- 1:13:41	Dancer 3 dances softly, guided by dancer 7. Then dancer 3 has a solo. He invites dancer 5 backstage to come back on stage again. More dancers walk on stage together with dancer 5. They stand on the sides of the stage.	The music builds down to a single glockenspiel rhythm with one note per count.		Dancer 3 dances as if he is learning how to move again and it looks like dancer 7 is helping him with that. When he has figured out how to move again, he can dance alone again.	
1:13:41- 1:21:43	The dancers walk to the middle of the stage and back again. Then half of the group walks to the left side of the stage, and half of the group walks to the right side of the stage. They switch sides. The dancers start walking across the stage in little groups and one by one the dancers break free and run and dance across the stage. Then dancer 1 dances together with dancer 6 and 7, who guide her through the movement. The remaining dancers start walking and dancing across the stage, and lifting each other up.	The glockenspiel is accompanied by bongo drums, but in the same pace. Then the pace slowly builds up again. When the pace builds up, marimba enters the music. Towards the ending, piccolo and singing also joins the music.	The light slowly dims towards the end.	They seem happy and thankful for each other.	They remind me of little hyena tribes running and dancing across the stage in groups.
1:21:43- 1:23:32	Everyone runs off stage. Dancer 3 dances alone for a short while and all the dancers walk on stage again. Dancer 1 runs across the stage through all the dancers, who move in the same pattern. They end up in a diagonal line. Dancer 2 takes the orange blouse from dancer 1 and the black carpet is rolled back in. Dancer 1 runs around the stage and turns around abruptly. The screen turns black	When dancer 1 turns around, we hear the last note and the performance is over.		In the end, dancer 1 looks defeated.	It ended with the same energy as in the beginning of the performance.

1:23:32-	All dancers walk on stage for a final 'bow' (they don't actually bow). They look into the camera as the camera person walks past them. One dancer holds a sign saying 'vote' (referring to the US elections last November)	No music or sound.			
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Appendix II: filmic techniques

Time frame	Camerawork (camera position and movement)	Editing (as it was edited live, mainly the alternating between shots will be remarked)	Other remarks
24:26-26:44	It starts with an extreme long shot. Next, we see medium shots from dancers backstage. Then the camera person follows dancer 1 with a dolly shot. The camera is handheld, giving a bumpy image.	The extreme long shot functions as an establishing shot of the stage.	
26:44-29:00	It starts again with an extreme long shot. Then, in order to get the movement of the entire body in frame, dancer 1 is filmed with a long shot. The camera moves along with her, so she stays in the centre of the screen. (again with a handheld camera). As the rhythm of the music and the movement of the body become faster, the camera zooms in on her until it reaches medium long shot. This part ends again with an extreme long shot.		
29:00-30:45	The camera man stands in the dark, so we see a silhouette of dancer 2 on the right half of the screen, and dancer 1 in the back of the stage on the left half of the screen, making it look like they		In the back, we see the reflection of dancer 1 on the window of the studio, adding an extra

	are mirroring each other. The camera man pans slightly from side to side, following the movement of the dancers. He centres dancer 1.		dimension to the 'mirror'.
30:45-32:05	Starts again with an extreme long shot. This is followed up by a medium long shot of 2 of the dancers. The camera follows the movement of the dancers, so when they go down, the camera also goes down. Each time the camera follows a new dancer in long shot/medium long shot.	The extreme long shot again establishes the new dancers coming onto the stage. The shot is again used before the camera focuses on a new dancer, so the overview is given before switching randomly to a new dancer. Then the new dancers come in and this is also seen from an extreme long shot.	
32:05-37:44	Extreme long shot to introduce new dancers. Then the camera follows dancer 3 walking across the dancers. Another extreme long shot when new dancers come on stage. The camera follows dancer 9, but when dancer 1 runs on stage he follows her. This is also filmed with handheld camera. Another extreme long shot to get an overview of all dancers. Then the camera follows dancer 1 again, in long shot (other dancers are dancing in front of her but the focus is on dancer 1). To show the audience that dancer 1 and 2 are dancing together in a duet, another extreme long shot is used. Another extreme long shot shows dancer 2 going off stage while dancer 1 remains dancing. We see her dancing in long shot, then extreme long shot, then medium long shot, and then the camera person comes closer to dancer 1 until we see her in medium shot.	We switch from a long shot from dancer one to a medium long shot from dancer 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When we see the dancers in extreme long shot, we can also see the camera people walking on stage. - The medium shot allows us to see the dancers panting and their facial expressions.

37:44-43:37	Extreme long shot. Long shot of dancer 1 running towards dancer 2, inviting him on stage. Same silhouette construction as before. Extreme long shot as more dancers come on stage. Medium long shot/medium shot from dancer 3, who is in the centre of the screen, walking through the dancers. This is continuously alternated with extreme long shots to see what is going on with all the dancers on stage. After a duet between dancer 2 and 3 follows another extreme long shot, after which the camera follows dancer 4 in long shot/medium long shot. When dancer 3 is dancing, the camera jerks to the right, as if the camera person is a spectator who quickly glances across the stage to see what is going on.	When dancer 4 is dancing, the image shifts to dancer 3 dancing (by editing).	
43:47-44:31	Extreme long shot. The camera follows dancer 9 in medium shot/medium long shot. As she swings forward, the camera moves along with her head.		
44:31-50:29	Another extreme long shot to show a change in positions and some dancers running off stage. The camera follows dancer five in medium shot. When she dances a duet with dancer 2, we see her in long shot/medium long shot. Extreme long shot. Long shot/medium long shot of dancer 3, 7 and 6. Then an alternation between extreme long shots of the stage and (medium) long shots of dancers follows.		The medium shot allows the viewer to see the subtle facial expressions of the dancers, which wouldn't be visible when watching from a distance.
50:29-55:06	Extreme long shot in which we see dancer 1, 2, 4 and 7. The camera follows dancer 1 in medium long shot/medium shot. Extreme long shot. The camera follows dancer 2, who dances a duet with dancer 4. Extreme long shot. The camera follows a different dancer each time. This goes seamlessly	The image switches from dancer 3 falling to the left to dancer 2 falling to the left, creating a sort of graphic match.	The dancers move very close to the camera, as if they don't notice that it's there.


	because the 'new' dancer enters the screen and the camera focuses on them.		
55:06-58:13	Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 10 (girl with curls). Extreme long shot. Each time there is a duet, we see the dancers in long shot, alternated by extreme long shots which show the remaining dancers walking forwards and backwards. The camera follows dancer 11 (girl with white pants and ponytail). Extreme long shot and camera follows dancer 12 (girl with short dark hair and white dress). She dances together with dancer 8 and the camera centres dancer 8 from then on.	Edited switch to dancer 1.	
58:13-1:02:06	Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 10. Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 6, then switches to dancer 9. Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 6, then dancer 1. Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 2 as he dances a duet with dancer 6 in medium long shot, then seamlessly switches to centre dancer 1 again.	Edited switch to dancer 1.	
1:02:06-1:03:25	Extreme long shot. Long shot of dancer 4 and 11 putting down the wire on the floor, and the camera moves down with them as if the camera person crouches down as well. Extreme long shot as the light turns off. Long shot/medium long shot of dancer 9.		
1:03:25-1:05:47	Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 5 in medium long shot/medium shot.		We see the camera people on stage in extreme long shot. When the 4 male dancers pick up dancer 5, we see the crew backstage.

1:05:47-1:09:54	Extreme long shot to show all dancers moving slowly. The camera person films the dancers in medium shot, each time panning to a new dancer in the huddle.	Cuts are also used to let the viewer see different sides of the huddle.	This time, the cameraperson doesn't move along with the dancers (e.g. when they swing down). At one time the camera followed the hand of dancer 3.
1:09:54-1:11:39	Extreme long shot. Medium long shot of dancer 7 who is picking up some of the dancers from the huddle.		
1:11:39-1:13:20	Extreme long shot. Long shot of dancers 3 and 7 dancing together, and later only dancer 3. Medium shot of him inviting other dancers to the stage.		
1:13:20-1:21:43	Extreme long shot. The camera follows dancer 12. Then dancers 3 and 6. Then dancers 9, 10 and 11. Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancers 5 and 8. Then dancers 2 and 4. Then dancer 11. (all dancers followed are running or dancing fast across the stage). Extreme long shot. Camera follows multiple dancers, one after another.		
1:21:43-1:23:28	Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 1. Extreme long shot to show dancers standing in a diagonal line. Camera follows dancer 1 again in long shot. Extreme long shot. Camera follows dancer 1 again as dancer 2 takes off her blouse. Extreme long shot to see the carpet rolling in. Medium shot of her running towards backstage but turning around. Screen turns black.		

1:23:28-1:24:53	Extreme long shot to see all dancers and the camera person walk on stage. He films their faces in medium close up one by one in a pan.		
1:24:53-1:27:15	Credits roll.		This is the first time the dancers look into the camera.

Appendix III: live chat

General comments about the performance	Comments about a specific performer	Technical/practical comments	Comments relating to Covid-19	Comments relating to previous performances	Comments about filmic techniques	Comments relating to liveness of the experience	Other
<3 (x7)	José Paulo dos Santos - Brasil te ama	why can't I see anything?	anderhalve meter???	Joyful, hopeful, timeless	super live editing	Ladies and gentlemen, please take your seats. The show is about to start. We remind you to switch off your mobile phones.	Arrase meu querido
Omg can't wait more. So excited !	Meu amor, orgulho da vida, José Paulo dos Santos	The stream starts at 8pm CET!	Het is natuurlijk niet hetzelfde als in de theaterzaal te zitten maar fijn dat we toch een stukje cultuur kunnen	I saw it many many years ago... What emotion	what a transition!	I saw it many many years ago... What emotion	

			meepikken in deze barre tijden				
toi toi toi	Cadê Mariiiii??????	I guess because the streaming starts at 8 pm...		22 years old, exciting in the present as in the past... and in the future. that's for sure.	And great camera work!	So great to be part of this...	Rip lil uzi (2x)
hearteyes (x5)	kd mari	is this tonight		Always amazing		Em êxtase aqui	and roody rich
lindezas	parabéns Mari 	@Rosas VZW @Jazz Ess Ah, ok. Thank you.					@Nara Anhorn Saudades
lindezas	Coisa lindaaaaaaa!!!! Parabéns Mari!!! (Margô) José Paulo orgulho imenso de você!!						muita saudade minha sobrinha... Assinado: Tio Java
fireworks	Show Mari						AEEEEEE
heartface(x2)	Muito orgulho José Paulo dos Santos						
hearteyes	Gilca ta chorando de emoção Mari!!!!						VOTEEEEEE

super	Très fière de toi, mon chéri José Paulo.						#vote
wow!	Parabéns, Mariana!						
what a transition!	Araraquara te ama, José Paulo.						
beautiful...	Mari, minha filhota maravilhosa						
Magnifique	trop beau frank						
So great to be part of this...	mon cousin franki						
Always amazing	Mari arrebetou parabéns pra todos vcs						
magnifiques danseurs	minha filha maravilhosa, num grupo igualmente maravilhoso onde tive oportunidade de conhecer alguns dos componentes pessoas deliciosas						
Em êxtase aqui	@Gilca Miranda, a sua filha a maravilhosa mesmo						
lindooooo	E Margarida linda, transmitindo						

	tranquilidade, saudades						
applause (x8)	Rafael pleno, muitas saudades						
An absolute double masterpiece - the choreography by Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker and the incredible music by Steve Reich. CULTURE HEALS!	rafael seu tudo !!!!						
22 years old, exciting in the present as in the past... and in the future. that's for sure.	Show Guida, Mari e Rafa						
Bravo! Muito bom!	MARIANA						
Energie - dans- muziek -bedankt.	MARGARIDA						
Lindíssimo!!! A arte a nos presentear sempre!! Gratidão!!	RAFA						
Wow!!!!	AUDREY						
So wonderful!	JOAO PAULO						
clap clap							
Amazing! (x2)							

Bravo!!!! (or a variation, x14)							
Joyful, hopeful, timeless							
Congratulations!!!! excellent performance!							
AMO ESSA PEÇA							
Sublime							
oorverdovend applaus							
wonderful							
Merveilleux !							
applause							
Dankuwel allemaal.							
Wat een tempo, wat een variatie. UNIQUE PERFORMANCE.							
BRAVO a tutti !!!! Thanks. Muchas gracias. Sois magníficos							
love rosas							
Thank you							
lindo Mari parabéns pelo grupo							
it was amazing							